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12th PLENARY MEETING

Friday, 1 October 1993 at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. CHEDDI B. JAGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

Mr. Cheddi B. Jagan, President of the Republic of Guyana, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the distinct honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, His Excellency Dr. Cheddi Jagan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President JAGAN: As I stand today at this rostrum, a flood of memories rushes to my mind. I recall appearing as Premier before the United Nations Committee on decolonization in 1961 to plead the case of my country's independence. Like so many other colonies after the Second World War, Guyana was anxious to secure its freedom and exercise its right to self-determination.

The road, however, was far from easy. Along the way there were many stumbling-blocks and casualties. It was not until 1966, long after most subject peoples had been set free, that we became independent and took our place in the family of nations.

The world today is radically different from what it was then. The total membership of the United Nations has grown significantly. The cold war, which had bedevilled international relations since 1947, has ended, with a promise of a new and more democratic world order. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, one of the two super-Powers, there are severe difficulties for the new structures which have been established. Nevertheless, hope is alive for the construction of an era of peace, based on respect for all peoples and the promotion of their general welfare. It is an exciting moment in world history, and for the United Nations there is a defining role.

Guyana has been honoured by the unanimous election of its representative to the presidency of this forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. This session will undoubtedly be a challenging one. I wish to thank the entire membership for its vote of confidence in our ability to undertake this lofty responsibility. It is, after all, an acknowledgement that all States, irrespective of their size, can play an important role in the Organization's work. I am especially grateful to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) group and the wider Latin American and Caribbean Group for their full endorsement of our candidacy. I must also pay a tribute to His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev for his capable direction of the forty-seventh session and to our distinguished Secretary-General for his efforts to promote the continuing success of our world Organization.

Success in these volatile times is often tempered. For, notwithstanding its important accomplishments, the United Nations cannot be said to have fulfilled the highest aspirations of its creators. The scourge of war is still rampant in many places. Colonialism is certainly not extinct, and today it threatens to survive in different forms. Many aspects of colonialism are evident in the

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ever-widening gap between the developed and the developing countries and the dependence of impoverished millions on the largesse of a few. This prevailing economic and social disparity provides a breeding ground for hunger, disease and poverty and ultimately constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

As the focal point of multilateralism, the United Nations must continue to explore the full limits of international cooperation in order to eliminate, or at least alleviate, the problems of the disadvantaged. I should like to think that there is now agreement that the grave situation requires collective action. Whatever its limitations, it is still the best forum available to States for diplomacy, dialogue and negotiation, and thus for the avoidance of conflict. We should seek, therefore, to enhance its ability to address our common goals.

As a small developing State, Guyana is fully committed to the ethos of multilateral cooperation which is embodied in the United Nations. We have come here to renew publicly our faith in the Organization and to urge all Members to pledge to deepen and strengthen multilateralism as a foundation for inter-State relations. Experience has shown that no nation, however powerful, can exist in isolation. Its borders are not impervious to encroachment by universal ills. Ultimately, it must come together with the rest of the world to find common solutions to common problems. AIDS, narcotic drugs, poverty and pollution are striking examples of the pandemic which affects us all. Control of these scourges requires concerted action by the United Nations as a whole. Added to these are natural disasters, such as the recent earthquake in India. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the Indian people and Government.

We note with some disappointment that international conflicts continue to undermine the capacity of the Organization to promote the cooperation which is deemed essential for reaching solutions to current global problems.

The real value of the United Nations in this period will depend on its collective ability to respond effectively to this wave of international conflicts, and to find acceptable means of peace-keeping and peacemaking which will not be a burden on its membership.

Such a development will inspire confidence among member nations to refer issues to the United Nations body, and to restore their reliance on the Organization's ability to resolve disputes before they resort to the battlefield.

Our first effort at constructing a framework for international peace and security through the League of Nations ended in failure. The reason can be found in the inherent weakness of the League, in the resultant inability to contain rampant nationalism, particularism and insularity and in the lack of respect for its fundamental principles. The United Nations is a second experiment, prompted by the disasters consequent upon the failure of the League. At San Francisco we vowed to spare succeeding generations from the scourge of war. We have before us today another opportunity to secure an era of real peace and stability, to deploy fully the resources of the Organization in the service of humanity, and to reach for a broad-based, sustainable development and some measure of prosperity and fulfilment for the peoples of this planet.

In our efforts to bolster international peace and security, the report, "An Agenda for Peace", which was prepared by the Secretary-General in response to the Security Council's request, sets out a number of proposals which merit serious consideration. While recognizing the need to provide the Council with enforcement capacity under Chapter VII of the Charter, we place special importance on preventive diplomacy, which would obviate recourse to physical intervention. As the experience of some recent peacemaking and peace-keeping operations has shown, these measures are fraught with uncertain political consequences. Moreover, they have proved extremely costly, particularly to small States such as ours which can ill afford such expenditures.

So diverse are the origins of conflict that each situation must be examined in depth to determine the most appropriate means of peaceful solution. In some cases the dispute may have legal implications and may therefore be best handled by a suitable judicial body. More often than not, however, the roots of conflict are embedded in a history of complicated political, economic and social factors. In such instances the ground must be carefully prepared for the cultivation of peace and stability. Fortunately, the advantages of the diplomatic approach are not lost in the United Nations, which increasingly is using the good offices of the Secretary-General and his representatives to induce solutions to long-standing conflicts.

We believe that these examples reaffirm the virtue of dialogue and negotiation. However, although promising for the future, other situations remain tenuous and require constant monitoring. Somalia and Sudan must be carefully nurtured back to normalcy. In Europe, Bosnia and Herzegovina stands out as an horrific example of man's

inhumanity to man, and compels us to search for a quick end to the wanton killing of innocent thousands. Indeed, the United Nations must hasten to devise new strategies to deal with these persistent convulsions in the global body politic.

The Middle East has been embroiled in conflict for much too long. With the recent signing of the declaration of principles for Palestinian self-rule, the road ahead is encouraging. Peace and stability throughout the region now seem to be within our grasp. We hope also that the territorial problems between Iraq and Kuwait can be amicably settled.

As far as South Africa is concerned, the announcement of a date for elections, coupled with supporting structures, gives rise to the hope that majority rule is not far off and we may in the near future welcome that country back into the fold of the international community. We urge the peoples of South Africa to eschew further violence and to come together for their common good.

I wish to record with satisfaction the view that a return to democratic traditions and respect for good governance and human rights has helped to further promote peace. Guyana will support any confidence-building mechanism which favours dialogue over confrontation as the means of choice for the pacific settlement of disputes. Because of the inherent correlation between peace and development it behoves each member of the international community to continue the search, where needed, for creative ways to settle disputes that could otherwise imperil not only international peace and security but also national development.

In this hemisphere, of which Guyana forms part, we are concerned that, despite the end of the cold war, Cuba remains outside the inter-American family. We truly believe that this is a serious anomaly in the context of the Organization's efforts to build a new world order based on mutual understanding and respect among all States in a united international community. We appeal to the United States and Cuba to demonstrate their good will and seek urgently to reconcile their long-standing differences. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which has a vested interest in the early *rapprochement* between these two major partners, stands ready to play a role in this process.

We are particularly pleased that the Central American region, which for far too long has been entrapped by anachronistic economic and social structures, has emerged from a vicious cycle of internecine violence. CARICOM welcomes the opportunity which this development offers for closer cooperation between two neighbouring regions. We are equally pleased that, after being held hostage by a military dictatorship unwilling to heed the popular will, Haiti is once again free to pursue a democratic path. We offer to President Aristide and his government our ready cooperation in the urgent task of reconstruction for social progress.

Guyana has itself only recently emerged from a difficult electoral process that, under international vigilance, proved to be free and fair. We are particularly grateful for the role the United Nations played in ensuring that the democratic will of our people was fully respected. After all, the right to choose one's government is a fundamental human right, which should never be denied. We commend the United Nations for providing electoral assistance at the request of those who seek it, and with due respect for the principle of national sovereignty. Elections alone, however, do not guarantee the preservation of democracy: they must be accompanied by the establishment of machinery that protects every individual in our societies. I am pleased to report that one of the first steps my Government took upon assuming office was to accede to the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Human Rights Covenants. We followed that with the establishment of an Inter-Agency High-Level Committee on Human Rights, whose function it is to ensure that Guyana complies with its reporting responsibilities under the Human Rights Conventions.

It is not enough, however, to satisfy the civic and political rights of our citizens: their fundamental economic and social entitlements to food, clothing, shelter and so on must also be provided. Human rights are indivisible, and to prefer one above the other is to deny their essential interrelatedness. The Vienna Conference appears to have recognized this fact and to have confirmed the need for a holistic approach. My own Government is dedicated to the proposition that human development must be comprehensive if our society's welfare is to be secured. Our stated policy, therefore, is to create an environment in which democracy will work to fulfil our people's spiritual and material needs. To implement our development programme, however, we shall require the cooperation of the international community to supplement our own limited resources.

As I observed earlier this year at a Conference entitled "Poverty in Guyana - Finding Solutions", we are in a situation of crisis. For, while we have recently begun to

experience high growth rates, the economy continues to be weak: unemployment is high; human and financial resources are scarce; and basic infrastructure has deteriorated, leaving the social sectors vulnerable to all the ills of poverty. We have been somewhat successful in raising production and productivity levels, but are seriously limited by a heavy debt burden. Some 90 cents of each dollar earned now go towards the repayment of the national debt. And the proportion of our external commercial earnings for payment of our foreign debt is nearly three times the average of the 47 least developed countries - an unbearably heavy burden. Even though we attempt to manage expenditure judiciously, through good governance - efficient management, a clean and lean administration and fullest respect for human rights - we cannot perform miracles. At the end of the day, we must look for assistance to buttress our domestic efforts and to preserve our tender democracy. With nearly 80 per cent of our people below the poverty line, we shall succeed in consolidating democracy only through economic development with social justice.

At the present time, however, the prospects for such support appear rather bleak. There has been a noticeable contraction in development aid as the economies of some donor countries experience difficulties. Their own electorates appear increasingly concerned with domestic problems, such as unemployment and falling living standards. Whatever limited resources are available are allocated by the developed nations largely on the basis of strategic concerns. The international agenda is therefore being set more and more at the sacrifice of the developing world. There is consequently an urgent need to reorder our priorities and to place development at the top of our agenda.

At best, however, development aid is no more than a palliative. Significant economic and social progress will come to the developing countries only when inequitable and unjust economic and trade practices in the global system are removed. As the 1992 human development report pointed out, we are denied some $500 billion in market opportunities annually, 10 times what we receive as foreign assistance, primarily because of protectionist policies still being pursued by the developed countries. We call, therefore, on those countries to open up their markets to our goods at prices that compensate us fairly for our labour and production. In this context, we urge the industrial nations to expedite the conclusion of trade negotiations, taking fully into account the interests of our small, developing economies. We would also wish and ask that the formation of large regional economic groupings - the megablocs as they are called - guard against the further marginalization of our economies and our countries.

Additionally, a definite solution must be found, during the current decade, to the third world's crushing external debt problem. In Latin America and the Caribbean, with 181 million out of 441 million people living below the poverty line, in the mire of destitution, how can human development take place when, despite onerous debt payments, the stock of debt continues to grow? A prospective Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) study for the region over the 1985-1995 period shows a serious aggravation in terms of poverty, unemployment and foreign debt during the decade. Between 1981 and 1990, the region's foreign debt payments were $503 billion, of which $313 billion were interest payments. However, in the same period, the region's consolidated foreign debt increased from $297 billion in 1981 to $428 billion in 1991. Little wonder that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) publication entitled "Children of the Americas" commented that this mechanism, whereby the more you pay the more you owe, is perverse and must be stopped.

Debt relief in the form of debt cancellation, grants, soft loans and rescheduling is urgent if the developing countries are to eradicate poverty, protect the environment and play a meaningful role in expanding world trade and ending stagnation and recession in the industrially - developed countries. Debt relief must be seen as an investment not only in the development of poor countries but also in the security of the rich nations.

Recognizing the link that exists between poverty, trade, population, development and the environment, we must hasten to implement the Rio programme of action outlined in Agenda 21. The developing countries urgently require the resources - both financial and technological - necessary to fulfil their obligations under that compact. As proof of its commitment to protect the environment, Guyana has set aside nearly 1 million acres of its tropical forests for research, management and development of our rich biodiversity. With the welcome of entities such as the Commonwealth Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme and the Global Environment Facility, the Iwokrama project, as it is now known, has been fully launched. At the commissioning ceremony held on World Environment Day this year, I dedicated the enterprise to our indigenous peoples, who are not only the principal inhabitants but also the custodians of our forests. It is fitting, especially in this, the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, that full recognition be given

to the important role they play in harmonizing man's relationship with the Earth on which he lives.

We also urge full support for the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, scheduled to commence in Barbados in April 1994. We trust that there will be adequate preparation and the widest participation in that Conference.

In a spirit of genuine cooperation, therefore, let us proceed to address the proposed agenda for development, which we have accepted as a natural concomitant to "An Agenda for Peace". Indeed, peace cannot prevail in the absence of development. Our attempts at peacemaking and conflict resolution in general will not succeed if inequitable and unjust economic and social conditions are allowed to persist. Of late, many of the organs and agencies engaged in the development process have had cause to lament the growing diminution of resources available to them, a problem now aggravated by continuing diversion of funding to a multiplicity of peace-keeping operations. Obviously, one recognizes the importance of maintaining global peace. However, it should not be at the cost of a disproportionate sacrifice of development, which leads to peace-keeping becoming an end in itself instead of a means of encouraging economic and social welfare.

The United Nations, whose universal membership encompasses both developed and developing nations, remains the ideal forum for forging a consensus on the major issues of peace and development. It is evident, however, that, as currently conceived and structured, it cannot adequately perform the role expected of it. That realization has led us to undertake the exercise of reforming and restructuring the Organization. To this end, we must ensure that the changes we make are not simply cosmetic but serve effectively to enhance the Organization's capacity to deal with the challenges of the post-cold-war period. Our reforms must therefore seek to establish the United Nations as the principal forum in which macro-political, economic and social policies are collectively and consensually devised.

If truth be told, the United Nations is still largely perceived, notwithstanding its recent successes in the political field, as a "talk shop". Like the old Congress of Vienna, which was described as a "perpetual dance", it is viewed in the eyes of our peoples - particularly the poor and the suffering - as an endless round of dilatory debate which produces fine resolutions but precious little by way of concrete action. To survive and succeed, therefore, the United Nations must become relevant to the lives of men, women and children everywhere.

Urgent action is required at this explosive period of mounting external debt, falling economic growth, falling third-world commodity prices, increasing unemployment, environmental destruction, underdevelopment and the persistence of poverty. Our troubled planet calls for statesmanship, political will and cooperation for meaningful change. Market forces alone are not providing the people with adequate opportunities to participate in and benefit from economic growth and development. We have a paradox of growing poverty in the midst of potential plenty. Science and technology have the capacity to eradicate poverty in the not too distant future and to halve it by the end of the century. Instead, we have today, both in the developed and in the developing countries, only about half the growth rate of a decade ago and the catastrophic phenomenon of "jobless growth" - fewer and fewer jobs and more and more poverty and inequality.

It is necessary to ascertain the root causes of global poverty and to develop an integrated strategy for its eradication. This necessitates a comprehensive world view and a recognition of the major contradiction of our time: the tremendous growth of the means of production and the anachronistic relations of production and the collective will to resolve this contradiction.

In the intense competition in a shrinking global market - owing in large part to the increasing poverty and the widening gap between the rich and poor in both the North and South, and between the North and the South - the three centres of the industrialized world - North America, Western Europe and Japan - are resorting to even more capital-intensive growth and the use of more and more sophisticated technology: computers and robots, cybernetics and automation. How can the poor and unsophisticated in the third-world countries survive in the "global village", in the "borderless world" when collectively these countries have not attained the target projected long ago of 25 per cent in the production of industrialized goods and with the great majority light-years behind in human-resource development and burdened by the dead weight of unconscionable and immoral debt payments? The rapid advance to robots and automation in the North also poses a threat to the advantageous position of competitive wage rates in many countries of the South. And the industrialized countries with budget deficits, growing numbers of jobless and retirees and inadequate welfare funds cannot afford the Keynesian luxury of pump-priming and "workfare".

In a situation of confusion and uncertainty, and with no solution in sight, the reactionary ultra-rightists and neo-fascists are getting stronger politically and becoming more vocal and strident. There is no answer to the hopelessness and despair of the more than 30 million unemployed in the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Despair is leading to alcoholism, narcotics use, crime and suicide. Meanwhile nationalism, xenophobia and neo-fascism are on the rise, leading to racial and ethnic tensions and growing civil strife.

The North-South dialogue has been languishing and has become a dialogue of the deaf. In the South, rising unemployment and abject poverty are interacting with rapid population growth, urbanization, overcrowding, disease, the production and use of narcotic drugs, increased flows of refugees across international frontiers and irreversible damage to the environment. Whereas it was said previously that the Berlin Wall prevented peoples in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe from travelling to the West, now new walls are being erected to prevent people from entering the developed, industrialized countries.

It is not enough to treat the symptoms of the global malaise. Radical reforms are urgently needed. Structural adjustment is as necessary for the developed countries as for the developing countries, but reforms must be predicated on social justice and have a human face. Human needs and human security should be the object of development. In this regard, greater emphasis must be placed on human capital and natural capital, and much more must be done to speed up disarmament so that the despairing and hungry of the world can benefit from greatly enhanced savings.

The development agenda must include a critical analysis of possible options and must deal with the international competitiveness of the third world, the basis of new modalities of international cooperation for development and the financing of development. It must also address core problems: alleviation of poverty, expansion of productive employment and enhancement of social integration, particularly of the more disadvantaged and marginal groups.

To attain these objectives, the people - I repeat, the people - must play a central role. They must be fully involved in all aspects of life to take advantage of their initiatives and creativity in the fashioning of a better future and a peaceful and prosperous world.

As the leader of a small nation which continues to believe in the vast potential of this Organization for making the world a better place in which to live, I appeal to the Assembly to devote itself to this urgent task. Let us work together to advance the cause of global peace and development.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Cheddi B. Jagan, President of the Republic of Guyana, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. ALBERTO FUJIMORI, CONSTITUTIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PERU

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru.

Mr. Alberto Fujimori, Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru, His Excellency Mr. Alberto Fujimori, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President FUJIMORI *(interpretation from Spanish)*: In 1990 the Peruvian people - heirs to an ancient culture, who, like other peoples of the third world, suffered the consequences of colonialism and later various frustrations caused by our history - began to ask themselves more and more why they had not reached a truly dignified level of existence comparable to that of the developed countries.

Why was it that a rich nation, known for its hard-working population and enjoying apparent democracy, should have to suffer from hyperinflation, isolation from the international financial community, terrorism, drug-trafficking, corruption and internal and external debt? In short, why was it ungovernable?

The so-called traditional democracy, which solved none of Peru's serious problems, had been nothing more than a struggle between privileged minorities, the elite and

party leaders who took turns in power while the country sank deeper and deeper into misery.

Nations, however, do not disintegrate in such crises; rather, they are roused to carry out moral and material reconstruction. Such has been the case in Peru.

I ask myself, and I ask all those present, the representatives of all the nations of the world, "Which is the first priority: the narrow, blind defence of an institutional formality that is now worthless and obsolete, or a better destiny for millions of human beings?"

We in Peru have experienced this disjunction which the Government of President Boris Yeltsin in Russia is experiencing so dramatically today.

Why should we fear making corrections in the course of our history, however radical they may be? To govern is to confront problems firmly, and not to defer, much less to evade, decisions.

In exceptional circumstances, when the civilized existence and survival of a nation is at stake, each country has to find its own course and its own solutions and then reconstruct its democracy in touch with its own reality. Failing this, it will simply become ungovernable - a situation that most often leads to anarchy, which in turn inevitably generates violence.

The institutions of Peru's incipient political system proved to be among the most inefficient on the continent. That was the context within which Shining Path and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement came into existence.

The model for Shining Path is Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge. This is why, for 10 years, that group's activities were directed toward destroying the existing system: industries, laboratories, electrical towers, machinery, bridges, highways and public buildings, costing the country US$ 25 billion in material damages and losses. New York learned what terrorist insanity is all about with the criminal attack on the World Trade Center - an isolated case, thank goodness.

We had reached a clear and elemental disjunction: either we stopped the crisis and the terrorism which steadily nourished it, or the country would collapse completely. My responsibility was to govern, not to serve as Peru's undertaker.

Our anti-terrorist strategy has led to the reinstatement of the principle of authority throughout the country, particularly in places as dissimilar as state universities and penitentiaries.

After being captured a year ago, Abimael Guzmán made a fiery proclamation to all his followers to continue relentlessly the war against the Peruvian State and its society. Today, in a 180-degree turn, he appeals to your speaker, the President of Peru, in order to retract his previous atrocious objectives. This shows essentially that he has inevitably come to terms with the total defeat of his totalitarian project.

In fact, I recently received a revealing communication from the leader of Shining Path, Abimael Guzmán, who is in jail, in which he asked for "a peace agreement". I repeat, Abimael Guzmán Reynoso has asked the President of Peru to talk about a "peace agreement". But a "peace agreement" implies negotiation between two belligerent groups considered to be equal - equal not only militarily but also from a moral and ethical standpoint. This is inadmissible, for there can be no negotiations with a genocidal terrorist group - described as such by the United Nations itself - whose leader, having been captured, tried and sentenced last year to life imprisonment, has absolutely no power to negotiate. Moreover, there is no correlation of forces between the Peruvian State and these criminals that could put them on an equal footing. There can be no doubt that it has been completely recognized that the State, the Armed Forces, the National Police and the people of Peru are prevailing over terrorism.

The Government of Peru is fully aware of its obligation to respect the international principles of the Geneva Convention. Nevertheless, it will make no concession in any way that would jeopardize the process of restoring peace completely to Peru. Through the attainment of peace in our country and the definitive eradication of terrorism, we are also preventing the spread of terrorism to the rest of the Southern Cone of our continent.

The Peruvian Government and its people will tirelessly continue their effort to fight terrorist violence, with or without requests from the heads of these organizations. If they really wish peace to be achieved as soon as possible, they should immediately and unconditionally stop terrorist actions and their methods of propagation, as a preliminary step enabling the Peruvian State to prevent further bloodshed and suffering for the Peruvian people and to take the further steps required to

facilitate the process by which the Government will fully consolidate national peace before the date I promised to my fellow citizens, that is, 1995.

Twenty-five thousand deaths; hundreds of thousands of refugee peasants displaced from their villages; thousands of widows and orphans; hundreds of handicapped and maimed, including civilian, police and military; thousands of children who have grown up in the middle of a cruel war; $25 billion of material waste; an entire country paralysed by terror and uncertainty: this is the sum of 13 fateful years, during which a State considered to be democratic appeared not to exist in the face of totalitarian terror. The end of this vicious circle is approaching after 17 months - barely 17 months - of the counter-terrorist strategy developed by my Government. Now we can talk about the State and democracy in Peru.

In our country, a new and exemplary democracy is being devised. It has some unusual elements: the common man's awareness of his chronic exclusion from the mainstream of civic life; his experience and sacrifice as a survivor of one of the century's worst economic crises; and his equally successful involvement in the war against the nation's terrorist threat - within the framework of the full exercise of his right to self-defence and the universal rights of the individual and of every citizen.

Peru can once again see the light of day. The nightmare of war is now behind us. Those who doubted that this was possible must now admit that it has happened and must recognize that the decisions taken in April 1992 were absolutely necessary. Peru is beginning to be a viable country again - an attractive country visited by thousands of tourists, who can confidently bear witness to its new look, a country with hope, one into which foreign capital is flowing, thereby generating more employment and wealth. In the near future, the Peruvian people will have the historic opportunity to decide upon a constitution incorporating the thoroughgoing reforms that will guarantee peace and progress in our country. This will be the end of a grim cycle. Peru is now a country open to the world - one which, like other countries all over the planet, is beginning fully to exercise its right to be a free and prosperous nation through the implementation of a true democracy and of a system of government that will benefit our people.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Alberto Fujimori, Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (*continued*)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. OCHOA ANTICH (Venezuela) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Allow me, on behalf of Venezuela, to extend to you, Sir, our very special congratulations on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. It is of great significance to us that the Permanent Representative of Guyana - a country with which we maintain special relations of friendship and cooperation - should be directing the work of this important Assembly. The President of Venezuela, Mr. Ramon J. Velásquez, would have liked to be present on this important occasion. However, the current situation in the country necessitates his remaining in Caracas.

In recent months Venezuela has had to assume exceptional responsibilities. Yesterday marked the end of our term as president of the Security Council. During that term, events of vital importance have taken place in the world. In particular, during the past 12 months we have witnessed with horror the re-emergence of hatreds, barbarism and episodes of ethnic cleansing that we thought had been consigned for ever to the saddest and blackest pages of history. In the conflict that is tearing apart the former Republic of Yugoslavia, Venezuela has played an important role - a role widely recognized by the other members of the Council - in the protection of human rights. Acting within the framework of the international bodies, we have sought, above all, to restore peace to that tormented region.

The United Nations has accumulated a wealth of experience in the deployment of operations for the maintenance of order - even in some situations in which peace had not yet been attained. With the new situation in the world, an organization that was established for purposes of dialogue and negotiation is faced with challenges of a different kind. From the maintenance of order in a traditional sense, it has moved on to operations that include military aspects, humanitarian, institutional and electoral assistance, the monitoring of human-rights issues and even development aid. In recent months the United

Nations has played an active and varied role against an ever-changing international background.

This year, too, the world has seen the emergence of new hopes. In one of the most strife-torn regions of the planet, where there appeared to be no prospect of understanding or future coexistence, two old enemies, the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, have taken significant steps towards a joint search for peace and the harmonious development of the two peoples. Venezuela welcomes the Washington agreement between Israel and the PLO, and will work within the framework of the United Nations to achieve a body of measures and resolutions that will help to erase the hatreds of a past that is still too close. Similarly, we support the peace initiatives and the process of demilitarization and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons that have always been an essential part of the work of this Assembly.

During our months on the Security Council, we have experienced, at first hand, the accelerated pace of world events today. We are concerned at the uncertainty of the roads to be taken and the instability that prevails in many corners of the world. There are no longer any ideologies, established values or clear directions. Nevertheless, amidst all the confusion a few issues have emerged which could become the single prevalent ideology of mankind. These are human rights, the defence of democracy and the protection of the environment.

Last June, in Vienna, the United Nations sponsored that remarkable encounter, the World Conference on Human Rights. We engaged there in a fruitful dialogue between Governments and non-governmental organizations, with the aim of working together to wipe out the injustices that still exist in our countries. In Vienna, we came to realize that the protection of human rights has become a topic of interest to people of different races from all parts of the world. The Conference confirmed the universal value of those rights and reaffirmed that democracy, human rights and development are equally important and mutually reinforcing objectives.

The further improvement of democracy might begin in this Organization, where the reform of the Security Council continues to be necessary in order to make its decisions more representative. The General Assembly must attach the proper importance to the discussion of this issue. Venezuela shares the general concern with making the United Nations a more transparent and democratic Organization. The new international scenario calls for a more representative Security Council without exclusive rights that discriminate against some Member States.

In the context of the defence of democracy, the United Nations and regional organizations have made outstanding efforts, especially in Haiti, where it is our hope that the lawfully constituted Government will be restored, and in Guatemala, where forces attempting a *coup d'état* were defeated by the weight of civil society. Today, democratic regimes prevail in almost all of Latin America. However, our democracies are still young and have experienced difficulties in recent months.

In Venezuela, we have overcome a severe political crisis which undoubtedly had the result of strengthening our institutions. Following a process which took place entirely within the framework of the law, Mr. Ramón J. Velásquez succeeded to the highest office. He is a distinguished historian, respected by all political forces in the country for the honesty he has shown in his career and for his profound knowledge of the Venezuelan mentality.

Democracy is a system of values within which respect for institutions is not only a duty but a necessity. There have always been attempts in Latin America to justify the use of force. Order, the fight against terrorism or communism, the inefficiency of the State: these reasons have often been used to justify regimes that, finally, did not re-establish order but abolished freedom. In the past, this has happened in Venezuela. Today, we have the serenity of waiting for our institutions to function, and we can now say with pride that democracy persists in Venezuela and that we have been able to overcome a serious political crisis.

Nevertheless, our future is clouded by economic difficulties. The defence and maintenance of democracy requires the full cooperation of the industrialized countries in the search for a form of economic development that will afford our impoverished peoples a life of dignity. Hence, we support the proposal by the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Samuel Insanally, for a summit to discuss the world's economic problems and agree on programmes of action to solve them. We agree that the "Agenda for Peace" put forward by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, should be complemented by an agenda for development which would place socio-economic problems on the same level as those of a purely political nature. The establishment and preservation of democracy involves reaching a balanced and equitable global growth rate.

Balanced growth was the central topic of the first session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in New York. The establishment of that Commission is one of the most significant outcomes of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. There is an intimate link between the issue of development, the financial resources required in order to attain it and the strict protection of the environment. Despite the lack of encouraging results, we still believe firmly in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and we wish to draw particular attention to Principles 3 and 4, which read as follows:

Principle 3:

"The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations."

Principle 4:

"In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it."

Accordingly, we are greatly concerned at what is happening on Venezuela's Amazonian border. My country has attached very special importance to the preservation of nature. Fully 17 per cent of our territory consists of specially protected national parks in which economic activities are closely monitored and restricted. On the southern border, in particular, we have had the support of scientific organizations and universities in the establishment of the Alto Orinoco-Casiquiare Biosphere Reserve, covering an area of 60,000 square kilometres. In this zone, by law, economic activities must be compatible with the fragility of the tropical forest ecosystem. Particular importance is attached to the cultural and linguistic heritage of the indigenous peoples, whose way of life has always been compatible with preservation of the environment.

Over the past five years, unfortunately, we have undergone a true invasion whose results are disastrous for the environment and which has introduced a climate of violence hitherto unknown in the area.

The cause is illegal mining, which, while taking advantage of the forested and inaccessible nature of Amazonia, is destroying rivers and whole hectares of vegetation. This phenomenon has reached a scale large enough to cause concern, to the point that it is escaping control by the States. Just recently - last July - illegal miners massacred a group of Venezuelans, of the Yanomami tribe. Brazil and Venezuela, where the criminal act was carried out, have established an ad hoc commission to investigate the facts and to make sure that the criminals are punished. But the fact that these events can occur gives a clear idea of the seriousness of the situation we are facing in Amazonia. Trees are being cut down, the sources of our great rivers are being deforested, the waters of the great tropical forest are being polluted with mercury and the indigenous population, the original inhabitants of the region, are being murdered.

The Amazonian border of Venezuela, 2,200 kilometres long, has been preserved. On our side there is the biosphere reserve, and in Brazil there is the Yanomami park, established in 1992 and covering 94,000 square kilometres. Nevertheless, the deaths of the indigenous Venezuelans show that violence and destruction are beginning to penetrate these protected areas. Illegal mining is a business behind which are the gold and diamond transnationals that arm them, provide them with machinery and build landing strips in the forest. They are deforesting Amazonia. Each year an area of forest the size of Portugal is destroyed. They are wiping out plants and animals: it is estimated that 1,200,000 species will disappear in the next 25 years. They are annihilating the local population, and this in 1993, when the whole world is commemorating the International Year for the World's Indigenous People.

Therefore, Venezuela addresses the international community to denounce this serious environmental situation. All the countries of the Amazon Basin have clearly proclaimed our sovereignty over the land in question. Amazonia belongs to us, but we have the responsibility to protect it, now and for future generations. We must work together to preserve our tropical forest. Each country in the region is making special efforts to take up the challenge of sustainable development in this zone where the ecological balance is so precarious. We particularly welcome the establishment in Brazil of the Ministry of the Environment and the Conservation of Amazonia, which will undoubtedly be an important factor in solving the problem. Only open and sincere dialogue between the countries of the region will enable us to resist the gold and diamond multinationals that are destroying, without regard for morality, this important part of the heritage of mankind.

We must live up to the environmental commitments entered into at the Rio Summit. We need technical support

and political, economic and social backing to confront the economic interests that are destroying our heritage. I appeal to the mining transnationals to understand that development does not mean destruction; to international agencies to help us implement the principles of sustainable development in this zone; and to the wealthiest countries to understand that, while poverty and ignorance persist among large segments of the population in Latin America, violence and environmental destruction will continue.

The United Nations has performed a monumental task in convening the Earth Summit and the Conference on Human Rights, and now the major meetings on population and social development. The resolutions adopted at these conferences are now being violated in Amazonia. Venezuela is making a great effort to ensure the preservation of the environment, often in areas to which access is extremely difficult. We are fighting for human rights among people who are not accustomed to respecting the law. We are trying to proceed in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, standing up to the companies that are seeking only to extract the wealth of the soil at a rapid pace. These are difficult tasks, but we are convinced that this effort is necessary in order to conserve our Amazonia and preserve it for future generations of our peoples and also for future generations of all mankind. The United Nations is the appropriate forum for the whole world to learn of our efforts to preserve this territory, its biodiversity and the integrity of its rightful inhabitants.

Mr. Dinesh SINGH (India): Mr. President, your unanimous election as President augurs well for the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. I extend my heartiest congratulations to you and best wishes for success.

Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General, has given a new vision and a new impetus to the United Nations at a crucial time in its history. We wish him well in his efforts.

My Government is deeply touched by the sympathy and compassion expressed by the leaders of several delegations on the devastating earthquake in India on 30 September 1993, and, with your permission, Mr. President, I shall have to go back to India immediately.

The United Nations will soon be 50 years old. It has had many achievements to its credit: decolonization; efforts to alleviate poverty; peace-keeping; disarmament; devising an accepted code of international law; respect for human rights and concern for the environment. I would like to reiterate India's faith in and consistent support for the United Nations and its efforts to establish peace and the well-being of peoples. We take note that the United Nations is trying to evolve so as to better serve the principles and purposes of the Charter. We support the Secretary-General's efforts to make what he has called a transition from the old to the new United Nations, which would be particularly useful and fruitful for the less developed and less fortunate States.

The euphoria generated by the end of the cold war has in the past two years given way to concerns about the difficulties of achieving a new global equilibrium and stability. Essentially, we can see these difficulties arising from the contradictory pulls and pressures exerted by the forces of positive integration and harmony on the one hand and fragmentation and discord on the other.

The end of the divisions of the cold war and the efforts to halt and reverse the arms race have generated some of the integrative forces. Some forces of integration have also been at work in the global economy, which has been characterized by the globalization and interdependence of countries' factors of production and of issues of trade, money, finance, technology, environment, population and development. The desire of the developing countries to participate more actively in the growth of the world economy and the building-up of free-market, liberalized economies for themselves adds another positive dimension. Issues of common concern and global survival - economic development and regeneration, environmental sustainability, demographic management, technological dynamism and health for all - have provided a sense of common destiny. The communications revolution has resulted in greater cultural intermingling and openness around the world.

These forces of integration are, unfortunately, opposed by those of fragmentation. Represented by sectarian and subnational aggression, racism, religious fundamentalism, bigotry, terrorism, drug trafficking and arms smuggling, they pose a threat to peace, global security, democracy, human rights and economic and social development. We are also witnessing strife, conflicts and cruel, unceasing and irrational civil wars in many parts of the world. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia and Afghanistan cause us anxiety and concern. The proliferation of such local conflicts and the ever-increasing flow of refugees across national frontiers reaffirm the truism that peace, like

freedom, is indivisible and that the disruption of peace anywhere is a danger to peace everywhere.

These divisive forces have caused not only political instability but also economic collapse in several instances. Conversely, economic sluggishness and lack of development in several cases have led to political upheavals. Inward-looking, exclusivist and narrowly self-centred global economic policy-making has been in evidence at a time when the global economy is overshadowed by recession and lack of dynamism. Macroeconomic coordination is at its weakest. Protectionist tendencies are strong. The potential of developing countries to act as vigorous engines of growth for revitalizing the world economy stands largely ignored. In developing countries, absolute and deepening poverty, hunger and malnutrition, disease, illiteracy and the lack of shelter and sanitation for a large portion of the population have caused political and social tensions. The structural imbalances and flaws of the post-Second-World-War international economic order persist and prevent the maximization of the benefits of interdependence and globalization.

Against this backdrop, the task of the United Nations should be to construct a new global equilibrium by fostering positive integrative forces and discouraging, if not counteracting, the forces of fragmentation and discord. For this, the new United Nations will have to reiterate the fundamental and immutable principles on which it was built: respect for the national sovereignty, territorial integrity and sovereign equality of nation States. I am glad that the Secretary-General stated in his report to the forty-eighth session:

> "National sovereignty is the art of rendering unequal power equal. Without State sovereignty, the very instrument of international cooperation might be destroyed and international organization might itself become impossible." (*A/48/1, para. 16*)

The United Nations will have to set an example for the conduct of relations amongst nation States on the basis of respect for the rule of law, democracy and pluralism. Any international framework, whether it be associated with peace or development, must be transparent and must deal with issues of global concerns on a non-selective and non-discriminatory basis.

In the final analysis, the institutions, concepts and agencies that represent the new world order will be judged by their ability to harness and channel the beneficial and creative forces of integration for the benefit of peace and development for all and by the ability of the United Nations to ensure that the interests of its weaker Member States are fully reflected therein. In these still perilous times, they would have to promote development cooperation and effectively arrest the plunge into insecurity, strife and chaos, particularly when these threaten the very foundation of Member States, where ultimately the United Nations is rooted.

There have been references in this Assembly to all these conflicts, big or small, local or with international dimensions, describing them in the generic terms of ethnic, religious and civil wars. The plurality and complexity of our post-cold-war world do not permit such generic labelling. Nor are these conflicts amenable to generic and instant remedies. A number of instances of strife or aberrations are part of the historical legacies inherited by Member States. Each is posited in a different socio-economic and cultural matrix of causation; each is caught up in a different cycle of circumstance and violence. The imposition of peace through unilateral external intervention will only perpetuate situations embodying the Orwellian logic of "peace is war" that we see in many parts of the world today.

Wisdom lies in overcoming conflict situations with a positive vision animated by peace and amity and in creating the necessary confidence and will for peace among countries and peoples. It is in this spirit that India is ready to initiate a dialogue with Pakistan to build mutual confidence and to promote a climate of stability in our region. I can only hope that Pakistan will respond to this, and have a dialogue with us, instead of trying to go around the world accentuating differences that will be difficult to resolve later.

We welcome the recently concluded peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and earnestly hope that this will be a true harbinger of further positive developments aimed at establishing lasting peace and prosperity in West Asia. We also welcome the announcement by Mr. Nelson Mandela that irreversible progress towards a non-racial, democratic South Africa has been made. In response to his suggestion, India, which had imposed trade sanctions against South Africa as early as 1946, has initiated action to lift those sanctions and to normalize relations with South Africa.

We trust that the recognition by the Security Council of the international boundary between Iraq and Kuwait will

contribute to the stabilization of the situation in the Gulf region. We hope that the faithful implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions will lead to the alleviation of the present difficulties of the peoples of the region.

In Somalia, a whole population has gone through a protracted civil war and famine with hardly any governmental machinery to tackle the situation. This made it imperative for the United Nations to act. As an unprecedented humanitarian mission, the multilateral action in Somalia enjoyed the support of the entire world, including the factional Somali leaders themselves. India, for its part, has contributed one of the largest contingents to this mission. Now that the situation has improved and starvation has been averted, the United Nations operation faces new problems. It is necessary for the United Nations to reassure all sectors of the people of Somalia about its role in the country, intensify the process of political reconciliation and adhere strictly to the original objectives of the mission.

The phenomenal increase in peace-keeping operations in the post-cold-war period and their inclusion as an element of the new agenda for peace is at once a matter of comfort and concern. It is a matter of comfort because the United Nations at long last has started playing its Charter role in the area of peace and security. In the altered international political environment, we would like the United Nations to realize its full potential. At the same time, the involvement of the United Nations on an unprecedented scale with peace-keeping operations causes us concern because operationally the United Nations is not fully prepared and equipped to discharge this role effectively. And, legally and conceptually, the limits, procedures and rules of the involvement of the United Nations are not clearly defined.

For peace-keeping operations to be successful, it is necessary to follow certain guidelines and criteria. All avenues of pacific settlement of disputes, as laid down in Chapter VI of the Charter, should be fully explored and exhausted before resorting to peace-keeping operations under Chapter VII. Decisions on such operations should be taken in a democratic and broad-based manner, and after thorough consideration of all aspects. To command universal endorsement and maintain their non-partisan character, United Nations peace-keeping operations must be based on the consent of all the States parties to a dispute. They should be undertaken with a specific mandate and a clear time-frame. Greater efficiency should be achieved in both planning and execution of peace-keeping operations. The Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, in his address to the General Assembly a few days ago, put forward a few proposals in this respect which merit consideration by the General Assembly. The concept of invoking humanitarian relief as a basis for peace-keeping operations may have to be approached with a great deal of caution and circumspection. Any new United Nations operation for providing humanitarian relief must be completely non-partisan - in fact and in the perception of the parties involved.

That consideration must also guide any discussion or decision on preventive deployment. The United Nations must not allow itself to be burdened indefinitely with obsolete and ineffective peace-keeping operations. Every possible measure should be taken to ensure the safety of peace-keeping personnel.

Another aspect of the agenda for peace which we would like to underline is the particular importance we attach to Article 50, which enjoins the Security Council to find solutions to the special economic problems faced by third States on account of the implementation of sanctions imposed by the Security Council. We call for an automatic mechanism that would put remedial action in place simultaneously with the imposition of sanctions.

An integral element of any agenda for peace in our time is the achievement of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament. Having endorsed the Chemical Weapons Convention, the United Nations should move on to consider similar steps in other areas of disarmament.

We welcome the unilateral decision of the United States to extend its moratorium on nuclear testing until the end of 1994. The focus of the nuclear-weapon Powers should now be on the early conclusion of a universal, verifiable and comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty leading to the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

India's commitment to non-proliferation is complete and unequivocal. India has an unblemished track record. India's proposal made in 1988 for an action plan for nuclear disarmament within a specific time-frame is of continuing relevance in our bid to rid the world of the global scourge of nuclear weapons. We believe that a new, just and uniformly applicable regime for non-proliferation which does not discriminate between the nuclear-weapon and the non-nuclear-weapon States should be considered at an early date. Such a treaty should place equal obligations on all States. For a non-proliferation regime to be truly meaningful, it must also address the

questions of a convention on the non-use of nuclear weapons, a verifiable freeze on the production of fissionable material, a total ban on nuclear-weapon tests and negotiations on general and complete disarmament. The global spread and reach of nuclear weapons reduce to a travesty the objective of achieving genuine peace and security within a narrow regional framework. It is our hope that the United Nations will take firm action in this direction to achieve this in the sense I have mentioned.

One area of concern for developing countries is the question of ad hoc and unilateral export controls and other restrictions being placed on the transfer of dual-use and high technology with the ostensible purpose of curbing proliferation. Non-proliferation concerns must not be made a pretext for denying developing countries access to technologies critical for their development. There is, therefore, need to evolve multilateral, non-discriminatory and transparent arrangements to regulate the transfer of such technologies so that peaceful uses and dissemination of some key technologies are not denied to the developing world.

There is perhaps merit in convening a special session on disarmament to examine the whole gamut of disarmament-related issues that arise in the new context of today. The question of a peace dividend arising from disarmament in the form of financial and technical resources for the enhancement of international development cooperation in the context of the United Nations could be one of the issues that special session could address.

It is obvious that there can be no global security unless development is ensured, and we therefore attach as much importance to an agenda for development as to the "Agenda for Peace". Agenda 21 of the Rio Declaration, outlining the plan and programme for global cooperation in ensuring sustainable development; the outcome of the Final Act of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VIII), on the partnership for development between the North and the South; and the forthcoming Conference on Population and Development, as well as the World Summit on Social Development, provide the international community enough opportunity to promote economic and social development and environmental sustainability, particularly in developing countries. The work on an agenda for development should build on all these development-related action programmes and provide a new impetus to development cooperation, both under United Nations auspices and in bilateral and other multilateral contexts. Enhancement of the role, resources and capabilities of the organs and agencies dealing with development in the United Nations system should be stressed. The United Nations should also be enabled to have a more interactive relationship with the Bretton Woods institutions in a spirit of finding considered and innovative solutions to global economic problems and pooling all available resources for that purpose.

Comprehensive and constructive dialogue between the North and the South and the strengthening of a global partnership for development are the needs of our times if we are to avoid the replacement of the East-West divide by a North-South one. India has always participated in the ongoing North-South dialogue through the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement and in keeping with the requirements of a more focused dialogue. India has become part of the new group of 15 developing countries for South-South consultation and cooperation, the G-15. We are acting as host to the fourth summit meeting of that group at New Delhi in December. Representing the developing countries, we have had a promising start through an informal dialogue with the G-7 and we hope to build on those beginnings in a spirit of "global partnership for global benefit", as was stated by my Prime Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao in his message to the G-7 Chairman.

Some key issues where there is an ongoing dialogue but which none the less need further consideration and implementation include: participation of developing countries in global macroeconomic coordination and decision-making; reciprocation by the North of the efforts of the South at restructuring and economic liberalization through the pursuit of expansionist policies conducive to long-term growth and opening them up to global competition in goods, services and manpower through reduction and elimination of protectionist barriers; increased capital flows, both official and private, bilateral and multilateral, to developing countries to offset the crippling effects of the debt burden and to accelerate growth and development; and a balanced, successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round, which should ensure substantial enhancement of market access for developing-country exports and of their access to the tool of competitiveness.

The profoundly humanistic traditions of the Indian civilization, with its emphasis on tolerance, harmony, non-violence and the inviolability of the individual, have found their modern expression in the setting up of a democratic, secular and egalitarian polity and society in free India.

Being the largest practising democracy and effecting a synthesis between a multiplicity of ethnic, religious and linguistic groups and peoples has been no easy task, as some in the West are themselves realizing even in the context of their relatively lesser diversities. The Constitution of free India consolidated this humanistic tradition and is indeed a veritable bill of human rights. A strong and independent judiciary and a totally free press have also been watchdogs of democracy and human rights in India.

India's commitment to the effective protection of human rights has now received another institutional impetus with the establishment of a National Human Rights Commission comprised of a retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, a retired judge of the Supreme Court of India, a former Chief Justice of the State High Court and other eminent persons as well as the chairmen of the three separate national commissions which already exist to protect the interests of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, women and minorities. The Commission has been mandated to inquire into allegations of violations of human rights and has been invested with wide-ranging powers, including the power to establish special investigation teams to carry out effective investigations. The findings of the Commission are to be published from time to time besides being reflected in its annual report, which will also be laid before Parliament. The law also provides for the establishment of human rights commissions by the State Governments, on the pattern of the national Commission, as also special courts for the speedy trial of cases involving human rights violations.

I am confident that members of the Assembly will accept that India has established the most appropriate human rights commission to ensure that there will be full human rights protection in the country.

Our commitment to universally acceptable non-discriminatory norms of human rights and their protection and promotion cannot be questioned. It was in that spirit that we participated actively in the World Conference on Human Rights, which recognized the importance of this issue. We are however pained that not enough emphasis is put on a major threat and impediment to the realization of human rights, namely, terrorism, especially the kind that is aided and abetted by one State against another. Why is it that a few so-called human rights advocates and Member States of the United Nations choose to focus on the human rights of terrorists - those who indulge in senseless murder, destruction, pillage, the disruption of civilized existence and the undermining of democratic institutions? Why do they virtually turn a blind eye to the violation of the human rights of the victims of such terrorism - innocent civilians or those upholding law and order and the territorial integrity of States? Can they in true conscience allow terrorists and their supporters to usurp the moral high ground on human rights?

The United Nations will have to take strong action against terrorists because terrorists engage in all kinds of violence. They try to upset democratically taken decisions in a country by using force and killing people. This must be totally condemned by the United Nations and stopped completely so that people can live in peace and in democracy and express their views in accordance with the constitution of their country.

In sum, we believe that international cooperation in the protection of human rights can succeed only if it is within the framework of respect for the sovereignty and integrity of States and of a vigorous global programme for anti-terrorist action. We would, however, like to point out that any unilateral use of human rights as an instrument of political pressure or intervention, or as an obstacle to trade or a condition for development cooperation and aid, in fact serves the opposite purpose and impedes the full realization of the human rights of people of affected countries.

The enhanced role of the United Nations in international affairs calls for the restructuring and redefining of the functions of its principal organs.

The responsibilities of the Security Council have grown dramatically in the past few years, requiring a greater degree of participation by the overall membership of the United Nations in the Council's decision-making process. We must recognize that the membership of the United Nations has grown enormously over the years. A more balanced and expanded representation for Member States in the Council is therefore inevitable. Unity of purpose among its members rather than size determines the efficiency of any organization. The expansion should not be done selectively or in a piecemeal manner. The principles or criteria of expansion of the permanent and non-permanent membership should be agreed upon by consensus. For the selection of additional States in an expanded Council, the population - which represents the principle of democracy and an element of power - the size of the economy and the future potential of the countries concerned should be taken into account, along with equitable geographical distribution and the contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. There is virtual unanimity among those who have responded to

the Secretary-General that an expansion of the Council is imperative. Interesting suggestions have been put forward by several countries. The logical next step would be to start a process of consultations to arrive at a suitable and fair formula that commands universal support.

The permanent members should be responsive to the aspirations of developing countries represented in the General Assembly on the basis of equality. It is therefore essential also to revive the role of the General Assembly, as was originally envisaged in the Charter.

We stand on a decisive threshold incomparable to any in history, a moment in time when we must bring to bear a larger vision and foster the forces of positive integration, democracy and cooperation at national and international levels.

My Prime Minister has, in characterizing the 1990s as watershed years in global affairs in the realm of political, economic and environmental challenges and changes, conveyed an unequivocal message:

> "We cannot go wrong if we make coexistence and peace our watchword, and common universal good our objective".

It is my Government's belief that this quest for the common good, jointly undertaken, will be central to the success of our endeavour and for the achievement of the Charter's objective of harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.

Mr. PAPACONSTANTINOU (Greece): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to extend to you the warmest congratulations of the Greek Government on your election to the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. Your distinguished personal qualities and diplomatic skills augur well for the progress of work of the current session.

I should be remiss if I did not express the deep appreciation of the Greek Government to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the most distinguished way in which he has been discharging his high duties. His dynamism, energy, perseverance, political will and leadership, together with a determined vision of the new world structure, constitute invaluable and solid foundations for a more efficient and creative United Nations response to the challenges of the close of the twentieth century. He has our full support.

Let me also join previous speakers in welcoming, from this rostrum, the new Members that have been admitted to the United Nations this year.

We were deeply shocked by the tragic news of the devastating earthquake in India, which has resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of lives. I express, on behalf of the Greek Government and of the Greek people, our sincere sympathy for the families of victims and for the friendly people of India.

Earlier this week, the Foreign Minister of Belgium, in his capacity as President of the Council of the European Community, delivered a statement on behalf of the European Community and its 12 member States. My Government fully subscribes to its content.

An unprecedented and historic event has enhanced hopes for the peoples living in the Middle East. Israelis and Palestinians have made a courageous step, in Washington, towards peace. Greece, together with its European Community partners, offers its full support for keeping the present momentum so that the parties involved may soon reach comprehensive and lasting agreements. We have always taken the stand that peace in the Middle East could be achieved through direct dialogue between all the parties. The Prime Minister of Greece, Mr. Mitsotakis, addressing the General Assembly in 1981 in his capacity as Foreign Minister stressed, *inter alia*, that:

> "The prolongation of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the failure of all unilateral attempts to resolve it demonstrate that only dialogue among the parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, can lead to a just and lasting solution." *(A/36/PV.16, p. 17)*

We are extremely satisfied that these historic, direct talks have paved the way to peace.

In today's global political landscape, the international community must address many challenges that are neither familiar nor simple. Troubling developments in areas with varying political and economic conditions are affecting millions of people who are caught in a circle of violence and suffering. Millions face starvation. We must take heart, however, from the determination of peoples in all parts of the world to sustain freedom and human rights, and to choose their futures even in the face of declining output, rising unemployment and inflation. In the quest for a better world, for a better future, man is striving to improve his social, economic and political institutions.

The future of mankind is inextricably linked to the way in which we have lived and acted during the twentieth century and, in particular, during the last four decades. During this period the international community had rested its hopes on the United Nations system in order to address the challenges of modern society. Our Organization has stood the test of time. It has offered us a valuable service in the fields of peace and security. It has also helped us, to a great extent, in our common endeavours towards eliminating injustice, economic imbalances and social disparities, and in safeguarding the environment.

We firmly believe that all Members of the United Nations, together, have a moral obligation to act in order to ensure a better future for mankind. Previous speakers have duly stressed the need to react jointly to the challenges.

In this respect, allow me to announce that the Government of Greece, eager to contribute towards this end, has the honour to propose the convening in Greece, in January of the year 2000, of an international United Nations summit aimed at adopting a global agenda for the twenty-first century. The general topic of this summit conference could be "Partners for a Better World: on the Threshold of the Twenty-first Century". An ad hoc preparatory committee or an open-ended working group of the whole could be established by this body to cope with the substance and the organizational aspects of the summit. Greece expresses its willingness and readiness to work bilaterally and collectively towards the realization of this United Nations summit conference. I might add that, after all, Greece was the cradle of the democracy that humanity as a whole now enjoys. It is the right place to hold the summit proposed by the Greek Government.

We are living through a period of radical changes, especially in Europe. Former adversaries are now cooperating on the basis of common values and principles. Historical agreements have been reached in arms control and arms reduction, both regionally and globally.

These changes have also brought new risks and uncertainties: the proliferation of new States; the reappearance of claims of numerous national minorities suppressed under communism, and with them the danger of disputed borders; and, on top of these, the economic collapse and heavy transition costs in the former communist countries, as well as the re-emergence of nationalism, national antagonisms, religious fanaticism and populist tendencies. All of these issues have set the stage for a new approach to the question of security and stability in Europe, which has emerged as the major issue of political importance in the old continent. Let me also emphasize that security in Europe is linked to the economic development and maturity of the democratic process and institutions in Eastern Europe, the Balkan peninsula and the Maghreb. Uncontrolled and unlimited migration resulting from political turmoil and economic hardship in these countries could cause social and economic problems affecting even the more prosperous countries in Western Europe.

The significance of the United Nations in maintaining peace has grown dramatically. It is enough to compare the 13 peace-keeping operations undertaken during the first 42 years of its existence with the same number of operations established between 1991 and 1992. Only last week the Security Council decided to establish two new peace-keeping operations in Haiti and in Liberia.

The prestige, credibility and power of the United Nations have been enhanced by the positive outcome of the peace-keeping operations. However, the United Nations system was not ready to cope with such an extended challenge, and there seems to be a consensus that United Nations methods and capabilities need to be adjusted and improved. More effective ways to prevent and contain conflicts have been considered by the United Nations, world leaders and respected think-tanks. The Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Peace" has stimulated the ongoing discussions and has already resulted in the adoption of a series of measures.

Greece strongly supports the United Nations peace-keeping operations, as well as peace-building and peacemaking activities. Our presence in Somalia, Iraq, Kuwait and Western Sahara indicates our increasing involvement in peace-keeping. In this context, I should also mention our contribution to the United Nations polling officers unit in Cambodia and in other parts of the world.

Cyprus, a member of the United Nations, still remains occupied and divided. Thirty thousand Turkish troops occupy 38 per cent of the Republic. What is more, thousands of settlers from the mainland have upset the demographic balance of the population. We note with deep concern a complete lack of progress towards a solution of the Cyprus problem during this year. In spite of the efforts of the Secretary-General and his representatives, talks in New York and in Cyprus came to a standstill because of the unwillingness of the Turkish Cypriot leadership to engage in meaningful negotiations either on the overall agreement or on confidence-building

measures. We join the Secretary-General's call to Turkey to fully assume its responsibilities and exercise its decisive influence with the Turkish-Cypriot leaders in order to achieve progress.

The recent breakthrough in the Middle East has proved that there are no intractable problems, if there is a political will. This genuine will is required from Ankara in order to re-establish the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Cyprus, while guaranteeing and protecting the rights of all its citizens. Here, I would remind the Assembly that the question of the missing persons has not been resolved. Greece will maintain its constructive attitude in the hope that it will be reciprocated. My Government this year increased its contribution to the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus to $6.5 million, as evidence of our strong commitment to achieving a political settlement while safeguarding peace in Cyprus.

We follow with particular attention the tireless efforts of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to achieve decisive reforms to consolidate the democratic institutions and establish an open market economy. We sympathize with their calls for assistance. We participate in all initiatives to promote a smooth integration of the newly established States into international institutions. The consolidation of democratic institutions and processes in Russia is of the utmost importance for Europe and for my country in particular.

An eloquent example of the upheaval brought about by the dramatic changes in Europe is the situation in the former Yugoslavia. Here, and especially in Bosnia, the upheaval has turned into a tragedy of unprecedented proportions. No matter how much we contribute to prevent and ease the suffering of the people, there is no remedy unless and until a political solution has been agreed upon by all parties. Their leaders should understand that continued fighting increases hatred and decreases the chances of a compromise, and should seize any acceptable opportunity for peace for the sake of their people. The Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia have exercised all their ingenuity to convince those leaders of these simple truths. They have consistently tried to guide negotiations towards the principles of the London Conference. Cyrus Vance, Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord Owen deserve our gratitude for their tremendous efforts.

Greece, along with its European Community partners, plays a constructive role in the search for a negotiated overall settlement. We were close to an agreement last May after the Athens meeting, for which the Greek Government and particularly the Prime Minister, Mr. Mitsotakis, worked hard. Let us hope that the present chance will not be missed.

When an agreement is reached in Bosnia, we must take an active part in the huge task of the reconstruction of the former Yugoslavia. We propose to start planning for this task right now. The main responsibility lies with the European Community. Greece expresses its readiness to host an international meeting for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the former Yugoslavia, with the participation of donors, as well as of neighbouring countries. Substantial economic and financial assistance is the prerequisite for achieving social harmony and consolidating democracy. Let us hope that peace will be achieved sooner rather than later. Serious consideration should be given now to planning for the day after peace is achieved.

May I remind the Assembly that the agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians came very suddenly. Only now is the international community thinking of ways to assist the region to recover and achieve economic reconstruction and rehabilitation. Let us not be late in the case of the former Yugoslavia. If we act right now, we act on time. The day after should be taken into serious consideration by all concerned, and especially by the European Community and the neighbouring States.

My Government deeply appreciates the efforts of the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia in accordance with Security Council resolution 817 (1993). We thank Mr. Vance for agreeing to continue these efforts in accordance with Security Council resolution 845 (1993). The resolution of this problem will enhance stability in the Balkan region. Greece's position is clear: we are striving to eradicate a potential point of friction in the Balkans, friction which may lead to tension with unpredictable and perhaps grave consequences.

On this occasion I reiterate our earnest desire to strengthen, as far as possible, our relations with all our neighbours. We have pursued this policy consistently. To this purpose, we will continue our efforts to enable our northern neighbours to accomplish the difficult task of reconstructing their economies. The Balkan economies are inextricably interdependent; we need the cooperation of our northern neighbours in order to link further our economies with those of the Central, Northern and Western European

States. So our neighbours need the cooperation of Greece in order to integrate their economies with the European Community as well as to have access to the trade routes of the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

Greece is fully aware of the need to assist, and has already enormously assisted, Albania in overcoming its considerable economic difficulties and consolidating its democratic institutions. At the same time, we again urge the Albanian Government to grant in practice the fundamental minority rights established within the process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, particularly in the fields of education and religion. Religious freedom and the right to education should not be denied to the Greek minority nor to any minority anywhere in the globe. Albania cannot deny to the minorities within its borders what it itself asks for its minorities abroad.

The elimination of weapons of mass destruction, including in particular nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, is a goal towards which, despite progress achieved, we must persevere. The signing of the chemical-weapons Convention on 12 January 1993 was an important step. We look forward to the Conference of 1995 for an unconditional and indefinite renewal of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We also note with satisfaction the progress made towards the negotiation of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

The World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna last June, has led to the emergence of common views and strategies involving large sectors of our societies and to prospects for better cooperation between the institutions and organizations active in this area.

We hope that the vicious circle of violence in South Africa will end soon, with the cooperation of all South African leaders, and that a new political system will be born. Greece, along with its European Community partners, intends to play a constructive role in assisting that country in its transition to majority rule.

In Somalia, the United Nations embarked upon the first peace enforcement operation to secure a safe environment for humanitarian operations, disarm militia and pursue the difficult task of political recovery. Pacification has been accomplished to a large extent though serious problems remain. As a troop contributor to the United Nations Operation in Somalia, Greece firmly believes that this operation should not be allowed to fail.

Greece and its European Community partners maintain a fruitful dialogue in both political and economic matters with the countries of Latin America. This dialogue will be continued with great interest at the San Jose and Rio ministerial meetings, which will take place next year under the Greek presidency of the European Community and in Greece.

In many of the poorest developing countries, standards of living continue to decline, while in other developing countries the results of economic performance are, to say the least, mixed. Thus, some economies in Asia are vibrant. Latin America, with the debt crisis behind it, has pursued successful structural adjustment programmes. On the other hand, in half of the developing world the picture remains bleak. It is particularly so in Africa. The needs are compelling.

We share the view that growth should be sustainable in that it creates more employment, less poverty and greater equality of opportunity, and also in that it promotes human freedom and the preservation of the environment. Successful national policies are necessary to bring about greater participation by the people in economic, social and political life.

In concluding my statement, I appeal to every Member, not only in my capacity as Foreign Minister of Greece, but also as a man who wants to see his grandchildren live in a different, better world - a world of tolerance, peace and solidarity. Let us join our efforts and share our experience for a better tomorrow. Let us be tolerant of each other in order to ensure a better life for our children and for their children. Let us ensure that solidarity and partnership prevail over sterile antagonism, micronationalism and totalitarian ideologies and regimes. Let us work together to eliminate war, famine, genocide, "ethnic cleansing", holocaust, xenophobia, racism and aggression.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.